



CREATIVE WRITING PACK

With lots of spare time, it can be easy to drift into feeling low, or spiral into worry overdrive. Creating a structure for your day including small, achievable goals will help to break up the time.

You can still make loads of progress, even if you're stuck in one place. So why not do this with your creative writing?

Set aside some time each day to write – you can use the prompts in this pack to inspire you. Get into the good habit of writing every day and you will be able to look back at the end of the week and feel a real sense of achievement.

You could even set yourself the goal of submitting to this year's Koestler Awards, which closes on the 30th April. More information, along with an entry form, is included at the back of this pack.

5 QUICK WRITING PROMPTS

Choose a prompt and write for 15 minutes. You can write anything that pops into your head – just get that pen on the paper.

1. Take a familiar scene from a book or film and rewrite it, adding yourself in as a character (spectator, narrator, background figure, etc).
2. Everything that was ever glued together suddenly comes unstuck. Write about that moment.
3. Write about a fed-up guardian angel whose human keeps putting him- or herself in danger.
4. Write about a painter who is commissioned to paint a dead man or woman using no pictures, only descriptions from other people.
5. You're playing chess and you move your castle. As you do, you feel the house shake and begin moving forward as well.

CHARACTER

This is key – why should we care about the main character, or “protagonist”? Why are we on their side instead of the villain’s?

Complete the following exercises to develop your characters.

1. Think of three people you know well. Give your character the hair and laugh of person 1, the face and bedroom of person 2, and the clothes and habits of person 3. This is your new protagonist. Give us an idea of who your character is by describing only the first 60 seconds of their day.
2. Pick a small, insignificant item from your room (a pen lid, an old sock, an apple core) and write about a character who keeps it on them at all times. Why do they do this? What would happen if they lost it?
3. Create “antagonists” (or villains) by turning ordinary animals into monsters that prey on humans: pigeons in the yard; cats in the neighbourhood; or even the beloved family rabbit. Give these animals intelligence and set them loose.

Bonus challenge: Can you write a piece with no characters at all? Try a poem, or a long description.

PERSPECTIVE

In order to make your characters more believable, they have to have their own individual thoughts, feelings and experiences.

To imagine how different characters view the world, try taking on different perspectives by completing the tasks below.

1. Write from the perspective of a person in the year 2550.
2. Write from the perspective of an inanimate object in nature, like a rock or the wind.
3. Write from the perspective of a blind person who comes home to find all the furniture in his/her apartment rearranged.

7 DAY WRITING CHALLENGE

Choose any of the prompts and exercises in this book and write about the same one every day for 7 days.

Every day, write a completely different piece, but using the same prompt. See how varied you can make it!

For an added challenge, start by doing 5 minutes the first day, 10 the second, then 15, 20, 25 and 30, all the way up to 35 minutes on the seventh day.



LANGUAGE GAMES

Work on some skills using metaphor and choosing words carefully with this fun, challenging exercise.

Imagine you live in a world where there are only 10 words you can ever use. You can repeat them as much as you want, but you can't ever use any other words.

On the next page, write down the 10 words you'd choose. Then, make sentences with them in order to communicate something to your cell mate or maybe to a family member or friend over the phone.

You can measure their understanding by writing your actual intended meaning below the sentence.

Remember, you've only got 10 words to use, so choose them well!

Your 10 words

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Your 10 sentences

1.

Actual meaning:

2.

Actual meaning:

3.

Actual meaning:

4.

Actual meaning:

5.

Actual meaning:

6.

Actual meaning:

7.

Actual meaning:

8.

Actual meaning:

9.

Actual meaning:

10.

Actual meaning:

Now that you've got your creative muscles working, why not try writing a piece for the Koestler Awards?

The Awards

The Koestler Awards are for people in the criminal justice system. Each year, over 3,500 people in custody and in the community share their creative work by taking part.

Over 2,000 awards are given each year. Every entrant gets a certificate and many winners receive a cash prize.

Platinum: £100 + certificate

Gold: £60 + certificate

Silver: £40 + certificate

Bronze: £20 + certificate

Special Awards: £25 + certificate

Highly Commended: certificate

Commended: certificate

Participation: certificate

The Judges

Entries are judged by over 100 experts from different fields. 2019 judges included Hot Chip, Emma Bridgewater, Raphael Rowe, Joelle Taylor and Carl Cattermole.

New Entrants Welcome

Let us know if this is the first time you have taken part in the Koestler Awards on the entry form and you will be considered for Awards specially reserved for new entrants.

Feedback

Entrants receive feedback on their work from the judges or the Koestler Arts team, who give their responses to the work and ideas on how to develop it. Our entrants tell us that feedback is one of the most rewarding things about entering the Awards.

"Feedback from experienced artists/writers is valuable because it's genuine, practical and focused. It's not sugar-coated or a platitude. In many ways, it's the best thing about the scheme."

-- Koestler Awards Entrant

Enter by 30th April to unlock feedback on your creative work, the chance to win cash, and opportunities for mentoring, exhibition, publication and sales.

KOESTLER AWARDS ENTRY FORM

Send a completed form with each entry.
Maximum 5 entries per entrant.
2020 closing date: Friday 3 April.

ENTRY

Is this the first time you have entered the Awards? Yes
No

Establishment: (Name of prison, hospital or probation service)

Title of entry:

Artform: (Choose one artform from the 2020 Awards Guidance)

Visual description of entry:

Using your name: (Authorised staff must agree)

If my entry is exhibited or published, I give permission for my first name to appear alongside it. Yes No

Sales of visual artwork: (Tick one choice only)

My entry is for sale. The lowest amount I'd be willing to receive is £ (maximum £250) My entry is not for sale.

I donate my entry to Koestler Arts.

ENTRANT (For groups – see the next page)

First name of entrant:

Last name of entrant:

Date of birth:

Prison or hospital number:

Signature of entrant:

For Koestler Arts staff			
K. No.	Artform	Supp. docs	No. of items

AUTHORISED MEMBER OF

STAFF Full name:

Job title:

Department:

Telephone number:

Email:

Probation area: (For CRCs only)

Can the entrant's first name be made public?

Yes No

Can the entry be sold? (Visual arts only)

Yes No

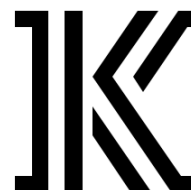
Who should any cheques be payable to?

I confirm that this entry is the entrant's own original work.

Signature of staff: (Entries can't be accepted without staff sign-off)

Date:

Turn for page 2 —>



Unlock the talent inside

GROUP ENTRIES ONLY — TELL US ABOUT YOUR GROUP

Name of group:

Number of people excl. staff:



First name: Last name: Date of birth: Prison or hospital number: Release date if in 2020, and home address:

Continue on a separate sheet if needed. If there are over 4 people in the group cheques will not be split.

ENTRANTS WHO ARE IN THE COMMUNITY OR DUE FOR RELEASE IN 2020

Please notify us if these details change

Date of release:

Home address:

Postcode:

Telephone number:

Email:

ASSOCIATES PROGRAMME

Associates benefit from more contact with us, through the Koestler Associates newsletter.

I would like to be part of the Associates Programme.

REMINDERS

Entrants agree to the terms and conditions in the 2020 Awards Guidance. These are available on our website, from your establishment, or you can write to us to request a copy.

✓ Information submitted on this form will be held on the Koestler Arts secure and confidential database.

✓ All work is handled with care, but Koestler Arts and its agents accept no liability for loss or damage to entries.

✓ Pack your work carefully. It must be under 15kg.

✓ Koestler Arts and its agents can exhibit, publish, and reproduce artworks in reasonable ways in print, online, film, audio etc to promote the charity's work. Artists retain copyright of their work.

✓ Koestler Arts can try to sell visual entries, if we have both your permission and that of the 'authorised member of staff.' Most work sells for under £100.

✓ Non-visual entries will not be returned to you. These include writing, performance, audio, film and animation entries – so please make copies.

MONITORING FOR DIVERSITY OPTIONAL

This anonymised data will not be used to judge your work. It is for research and monitoring purposes only.

Ethnic group

Asian/Asian British:
Bangladeshi
Asian/Asian British: Indian
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani
Any other Asian background
Black/Black British: African
Black/Black British: Caribbean
Any other Black background
Chinese
Irish Traveller/Gypsy

Mixed White & Asian

Mixed White & Black African
Mixed White & Black Caribbean
Any other Mixed background
White British
Any other White background
Any other group:

Formal education completed

No formal qualifications
Basic skills level 1 Basic
skills level 2 GCSEs or A
Levels Vocational training
Degree or post-graduate

I am:

Ex-armed forces personnel A
care leaver

Gender

Male
Female
Transgender
Non-binary

Age

Under 16
16-17
18
19-24
25-29
30-59
60 and over

Religion

Atheist
Buddhist
Christian
Hindu
Jewish
Muslim
Sikh
Other

Registered

disabled?

Yes No